DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 229 825 EA 015 600

TITLE Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators. Superintendent Career Development Series No. 1 (Second Edition).
INSTITUTION American Association of School Administrators, Arlington, Va.
PUB DATE 82
NOTE 21p.; For a related document, see ED 177 701.
AVAILABLE FROM Publications, American Association of School Administrators, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, VA 22209 (Stock No. 021-00815; $3.50; quantity discounts).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Education; *Administrator Responsibility; *Administrators; Competence; Higher Education; *Management Development; *Professional Development

ABSTRACT

These guidelines were developed to help state departments of education and institutions of higher education refine certification and doctoral programs in educational administration. Goals, competencies and skills, and delivery components are presented for administrator preparation programs to help school leaders meet the continuing challenges of (1) changing demographics, (2) an unstable economic structure, (3) the need to adopt new technologies, (4) changing labor market structure, (5) cultural diversity and human rights, and (6) changing family structures. (MLF)

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Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators

EA 015 600

Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators

Superintendent Career Development Series No. 1
(Second Edition)

American Association of School Administrators
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington, VA 22209

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- The Superintendent's Contract
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- Evaluating the Superintendent

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- Compensating the Administrative Team
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Stock Number: 021-00815

Library of Congress Card Catalogue Number: 82-074529

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Foreword

School administrators occupy critical positions in our nation's schools. Therefore, guidelines are needed for the training and preparation of these top educational leaders to assure excellent education for students.

These *Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators* have been developed taking into account the changing needs of our society and the evolving expectations our nation has for its schools and its educational leadership. The AASA Committee for the Advancement of School Administration (CASA) and the Committee on Higher Education Relationships worked in concert to develop this publication, which was written by AASA 1982 Cooperative Professor of the Year, John Hoyle. Ideas and concerns were sought from other administrator organizations and literature on the topic was reviewed indepth.

This important publication provides insight for those who aspire to a career in school administration, those who are already in the field and want to remain current, those who provide preparation programs and state officials who play key roles in recommending or establishing certification requirements. *Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators* also gives direction for inservice training.

This booklet replaces the 1979 edition of *Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators*. It is a basic component of the AASA "Superintendent Career Development Series."

We hope this vital publication will enhance the leadership capabilities of school administrators and ultimately lead to an even better education for the students in our nation's schools.

Introduction

This publication presents what the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) believes to be the most vital goals, competencies and delivery components that should be included in school administrator programs offered by colleges and universities. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) have shared ideas about specific administrative roles which influenced the content of this publication.

AASA has developed these *Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators* to assist state departments of education and training institutions in:

- refining certification and doctoral programs in educational administration,
- preparing for state, regional or national accreditation visits,
- strengthening the profession.

The guidelines will complement certification requirements in the various states since they are applicable and basic to successful educational leadership at all administrative levels.

The Guidelines in Context

These preparation guidelines were developed through the joint efforts of AASA's Advisory Committee on Higher Education Relationships and its Committee for the Advancement of School Administration. The work of these committees began with a thorough search of professional literature bearing on administrator training and performance. The search included careful study of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Task Force Report, "Preparing Leaders to Anticipate and Manage the Future."

Each of the four volumes in this UCEA report, published in 1982, was written jointly by a professor and a public school administrator. The monographs explore the following four topics: (1) Society and Education: Educational Management for the 1980's and Beyond; (2) Critical Challenges for Leaders Who Anticipate and Manage the Future; (3) Skills, Understandings, and Attitudes Needed by Leaders in the Future; and (4) Implications for Preparation Programs and Inservice Programs.

Six critical themes surfaced in the first three UCEA monographs: (1) changing demographics, (2) our unstable economic structure, (3) the need to adopt new technologies, (4) changing labor market structures, (5) cultural diversity and human rights, and (6) changing family structures. These themes will continue to present significant challenges for school leaders and are compatible with issues and challenges identified in other studies that were reviewed by the AASA committees. It is understood that any or all of these critical themes may be replaced as other key issues emerge in the future.

Changing Demographics

1. **Changing demographics:** We are experiencing in our society a major increase in the percentage of adults who do not have school age children or who are retired, a persistent overall decline in school enrollments in a great number of districts, and regional

population shifts. These factors, together, contribute to the erosion of the traditional support base for public education.

Unstable Economic Structure

2. The **unstable economic structure:** Our nation has recently seen a deterioration in its economy and in its position in the international market place. We have encountered intensified unemployment rates. This situation undermines tax revenues for all levels of government, and has had an impact on school finance.

New Technologies

3. Making effective use of the **new technologies:** This challenge is heightened by the explosion of processes for electronic information gathering, storage, retrieval and transmission. These technologies have already replaced many forms of routine mental and physical tasks and manipulations.

Labor Market Opportunities

4. **Labor market opportunities:** These opportunities are directly related to the new technologies, and many require sophisticated training as well as the ability to assimilate and manipulate complex information and material. The number of many low-and semi-skilled jobs will continue to decline. However those positions involving the handling of information will continue to increase.

Preserving Cultural Diversity and Human Rights

5. **Preserving cultural diversity and human rights:** This challenge is increasingly complex because of the changing make-up of the population. Groups traditionally viewed as "minorities" may become a majority, placing

an even greater obligation on the schools to respond to their unique social, economic, and educational needs.

Changing Family Structures

6. **Changing family structures:** These changes are reflected in the condition of both the nuclear and extended family, precipitated by high rates of residential mobility, divorce, and female employment; acceptance of alternative life styles; and a decline in teenage supervision and custodial care, all creating new roles for schools.

The implications of these six themes are extensive. They present special challenges for educational leaders who must comprehend and manage them. *Therefore, those responsible for administrator preparation programs must take the initiative in preparing educational leaders to manage problems which are, for the most part, unprecedented in history.* If school administrators are to lead successful schools in the future, the following goals, competencies and skills, and delivery components should be included in their preparation program.

Leadership Outcome Goals

Successful administrator preparation programs must prepare school leaders to *understand the theoretical foundations* and *demonstrate the application of* each of the following specific performance goals. *School leaders of tomorrow must:*

1. Establish and maintain a positive and open learning environment to bring about the motivation and social integration of students and staff.
2. Build strong local, state, and national support for education.
3. Develop and deliver an effective curriculum which expands the definitions of literacy, competency, and cultural integration to include advanced technologies, problem solving, critical thinking and communications skills, and cultural enrichment for all students.
4. Develop and implement effective models/modes of instructional delivery that make the best use of time, staff, advanced technologies, community reources, and financial means to maximize student outcomes.
5. Create programs of continuous improvement, including evaluation of both staff and program effectiveness as keys to student learning and development.
6. Skillfully manage school system operations and facilities to enhance student learning.
7. Conduct and make use of significant research as a basis for problem solving and program planning of all kinds.

Competencies and Skills

All students completing preparation programs should be able to demonstrate competencies related to each of the seven goals. These competencies and their underlying skills and understandings include:

School Climate Improvement Program

1. Designing, implementing, and evaluating a school climate improvement program which includes mutual efforts by staff and students to formulate and attain school goals. This competency includes:

   a. human relations, organizational development, and leadership skills;
   b. collaborative goal setting and action planning;
   c. organizational and personal planning and time management;
   d. participative management, variations in staffing;
   e. climate assessment methods and skills;
   f. improving the quality of relationships among staff and students to enhance learning;
   g. multi-cultural and ethnic understanding;
   h. group process, interpersonal communication, and motivation skills.

Political Theory and Skills

2. Understanding political theory and applying political skills in building local, state, and national support for education. This competency includes:

   a. school/community public relations, coalition building, and related public service activities;
   b. politics of school governance and operations;

c. political strategies to pass bond, tax, and other referenda;
d. lobbying, negotiating, collective bargaining, power, policy development, and policy maintenance skills to assure successful educational programs;
e. communicating and projecting an articulate position for educati..;
f. role and function of mass media in shaping and forming opinions;
g. conflict mediation and the skills to accept and cope with inherent controversies.

Systematic School Curriculum

3. Developing a systematic school curriculum that assures both extensive cultural enrichment activities and mastery of fundamental as well as progressively more complex skills required in advanced problem solving, creative, and technological activities. This competency includes:

a. planning/futures methods to anticipate occupational trends and their educational implications;
b. taxonomics of instructional objectives and validation procedures for curricular units/sequences;
c. theories of cognitive development and the sequencing/structuring of curricula;
d. development/application of valid and reliable performance indicators for instructional outcomes;
e. use of computers and other technologies as instructional aids;

f. development/use of available cultural resources.

Instructional Management System

4. Planning and implementing an instructional management system which includes learning objectives, curriculum design, and instructional strategies and techniques that encourage high levels of achievement. This competency includes:

a. curriculum design and instructional delivery strategies;
b. instructional and motivational psychology;
c. alternative methods of monitoring and evaluating student achievement;
d. management of change to enhance the mastery of educational goals;
e. applications of computer management to the instructional program;
f. use of instructional time and resources;
g. cost-effectiveness and program budgeting.

Staff Development and Evaluation Systems

5. Designing staff development and evaluation systems to enhance effectiveness of educational personnel. This competency includes:

a. system and staff needs assessment to identify areas for concentrated staff development and resource allocation for new personnel;
b. use of system and staff evaluation data in personnel policy and decision-making;
c. appraisal of the effectiveness of staff development programming as it affects professional performance;

d. using clinical supervision as a staff improvement and evaluation strategy;
e. assessment of individual and institutional sources of stress and development of methods for reducing that stress.

Allocating Resources

6. Allocating human, material, and financial resources to efficiently, and in an accountable manner, assure successful student learning. This competency includes:

a. facilities planning, maintenance, and operation;
b. financial planning and cash flow management;
c. personnel administration;
d. pupil personnel services and categorical programs;
e. legal concepts, regulations, and codes for school operation;
f. analytical techniques of management.

Using Research

7. Conducting research and using research findings in decision making to improve long range planning, school operations, and student learning. This competency includes:

a. research designs and methods including gathering, analyzing and interpreting data;
b. descriptive and inferential statistics;
c. evaluation and planning models and methods;
d. selection, administration, and interpretation of evaluation instruments.

Program Delivery Components

Management System Components

Preparation programs for educational administrators should reflect contemporary management concepts and technologies. Therefore, each preparation program should include:

1. **Diagnosis Capability:** Assessment procedures should be planned to diagnose the entry level competencies of graduate students in each competency and in basic communications skills. The faculty and advisory committee of practicing administrators should clarify the competencies, construct the performance indicators, and determine the minimum mastery levels for program admission, counseling, placement, and completion.
2. **Design Capability:** Programs should be designed to assure that students master all competencies. Reality oriented instructional situations emphasizing group activity, simulation, management games, assessment centers, and related activities and materials are encouraged.
3. **Instructional Capability:** Quality teaching by a full-time qualified faculty is vital. In addition, the use of quality adjunct professors, especially practicing administrators, for regular and short courses and for team teaching certain classes will promote the theory/practice union.

4. **Resource Capability:** The total resources of the university should be applied to assuring program quality. Carefully selected lectures, seminars, courses, and professors in other disciplines are vital ingredients in administrator preparation. The number of outside courses included from other divisions and departments should be a faculty decision based on the best possible learning experiences for each student.

5. **Program Evaluating Capability:** Continuous scrutiny of program design, delivery, and effectiveness is essential to establishing and monitoring program quality. Programs should employ assessment mechanisms that use systematically derived performance information on both current students and graduates as a basis for modifying program content and methods.

Content Components

Contemporary programs should contain several content concentrations from which individual programs can be constructed, drawing heavily upon data produced through the individual student's diagnosis. Knowledge and understandings will be developed from work within the content area chosen for an individual's program. It is expected that a *common core of requirements will* be included in the programs of every student:

1. Administrative, organizational, political, and learning theory;

2. Technical areas of administrative practice;
3. Behavioral and social sciences;
4. Foundations of education;
5. Research;
6. Advanced technologies;
7. Ethical principles of the profession.

Clinical Components

Campus based and field based clinical experiences are essential elements of preparing educational leaders. Clinical arrangements should provide opportunities for students to compare their experiences with the knowledge base, to diagnose sources of difficulties and identify problems, to develop plans and strategies suggested by their knowledge, and to assess outcomes. Opportunities should be provided for systematic observation and participation in several field settings under the joint supervision of faculty and experienced practitioners.

Professionalism and Renewal Component

Members of the department or program should hold and encourage students to hold membership and participate actively in professional administrator organizations. These associations are vital for professional renewal of administrators and professors and for encouraging lifelong learning and continuous personal and professional improvement.

Conclusion

AASA recognizes the risk inherent in developing *Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators*. These guidelines vary substantially from the programs provided by some institutions. Professionalism depends on creativity, soundly formulated innovations, and the capacity of individuals and institutions to capitalize on their unique strengths and respond effectively to unanticipated challenges. Uniform standards, rigidly applied, may impair the flexibility of programs in meeting local or regional needs. Therefore, AASA hopes these guidelines will not be used to limit program development or the expertise of given faculty.

However, the association is equally mindful of the difficult social, economic, technical, and educational problems which we face as a nation. Those problems, described in this publication, require the enlightened and responsible attention of all educators, since inadequacies in the training and development of the young will soon translate into burdens to be endured by generations of adults.

AASA is committed to providing a continuing program of professional development opportunities for its members. At the same time, AASA recognizes the importance of thorough, initial professional training for those with the awesome responsibility of leading and managing our nation's educational system. More than ever *Leadership for Learning* requires vision, dedication, technical expertise, and conceptual skills—capacities that can be stimulated and developed in soundly conceived and executed preparation programs of the depth and direction we have outlined in this publication.

Therefore, the American Association of School Administrators embraces these guidelines as a statement reflecting both the significance and enormity of these responsibilities inherent in administering schools. These goals and competencies provide a benchmark. The fully competent professional can point to them with pride and a younger generation of educators can aspire to these goals and competencies with confidence. Our children and society deserve nothing less.

Acknowledgments

The American Association of School Administrators wishes to acknowledge and thank the many people who were involved in the development of these new guidelines, including John Hoyle, AASA Cooperative Professor of the Year, who wrote the report, and the AASA Committee for the Advancement of School Administration (CASA) and the Committee on Higher Education Relationships which worked in concert to develop the publication.

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Final editing and production were under the supervision of AASA Associate Editor Judy Touchton and AASA Associate Executive Director Gary Marx.